YOUTH

BIRTH

843 A pregnant woman, in former times, did not make fun of a deformed person or stare at him, lest her baby have the same defect. She should give offerings to every such person in the neighborhood. She must not let a dog breathe on her or the baby would have fever with hot breath like a dog. She was herself dangerous and must not stand around to look at a war party lest she injure their strength. She must not visit any sick person, even her own mother, for she would cause the invalid's death.

Her husband must not go on a war party for he would have no strength. If he did by chance go, he must not kill or look on a dead enemy or the baby would die a violent death. He must not kill a rabbit, or if he happened to, he must not touch it. The penalty was croup for the baby. If he killed a rattlesnake, the penalty was convulsions.

844 When labor began, the mother retired to the segregation hut, where any female relative might go with her. The relative dug a pit in the floor of the hut and lined it with something soft to receive the baby. She suspended a rope from the roof of the hut and the mother knelt and pulled on it with arms raised until the baby dropped in the pit. If the family was travelling, she sought a secluded place and found an overhanging branch to pull on.

If labor was difficult, the helper might kneel behind her and push down over the abdomen. Sometimes another woman squatted in front of her and helped. At present, when birth sometimes takes place in the house instead of the segregation hut, the husband may be one of the helpers. "Some husbands will kneel behind a wife all day and hold her up" (26). Ordinarily, however, men fear everything connected with birth. If there was much delay, the cause was [845] thought to be a hair from an Apache trophy or from a dead man which had become twisted around the foetus. The shaman was then sent for and, after smoking and singing to find the position of the hair, he sucked it out.

When the baby was born, the umbilical cord was snipped about four inches from the body with a sharp fingernail. The rest of the cord was thrown away or buried. There was no special significance attached to it. The afterbirth was buried by a man, "because a woman could not dig a deep enough hole". Men, however, were ex-

2: Underhill E-5 (1931-1935)1939 NU28 Papago NU28

847 If the baby died and the woman wanted another, she buried it near the surface. If she wanted no more, she buried it deep. Women [848] professed to know nothing about means of abortion saying that there was little need for them, since an unmarried mother suffered no stigma. Deformed babies and those born by "light women" who did not want the burden were dropped in an arroyo to die of [843] exposure. It was considered that a woman who had a husband and did not bear children would soon die herself of the unnatural condition.

845 Twins were considered to be born shamans. People regarded 756 both them and their parents with some awe, since whatever they said would come true. Thus, if they said a certain person would die, he would: if they called him ugly, swollen, lame, he would become so. Therefore everybody made offerings to twins (the word used is the same as that for offerings made at a shrine). Their parents did the same. Anyone who rebuked a twin suffered. One informant slapped the cheek of a twin who annoyed her while gambling and immediately her arm swelled. She went to the twin for relief, bringing a gift. The child wet her fingertips in her mouth and touched the arm which immediately healed.

This power of twins did not persist beyond childhood unless they had dreams and became shamans in the regular way. However, they usually did so and were much more likely to dream than the average person. If one twin died, the other died also.

CHILDHOOD

[862] Babies were nursed until they were two and three years old. 753 One informant said, "My babies died. It was because they came 853 too fast. When there was a new one coming, there was not milk for the old one" (26). The cause of most infant complaints was supposed to be the fact that the fontanelle did not close properly. A shaman or an old women who had dream power inserted a finger in the child's mouth and pushed on the palate. This was thought to push up the [757] whole top of the head and close the fontanelle. Diarrhoea was treated with the vapor of canyon ragweed. The leaves were wet and a hot cloth laid over them, then the infant was set on the cloth in the vapor. Children's fevers were thought to be due to the hot breath of a dog. They and other diseases were treated in the regular way by the shaman.

854 The child was carried on the cradleboard until it was able to walk. Mothers, on their long expeditions to fetch food and water, placed the cradleboard on top of the other contents of the carrying basket and while they worked, stood it against a tree. When the

4: Joseph et al D, E-5 (1942-1943) 1949
NU28 Papago NU28

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frain from butchering cattle or going hunting, as they did in the old days. The mother observes certain other taboos: she must not allow dogs to breathe upon her; she must not look directly at the sun; and, according to one informant, she must not stare at or mock a cripple, lest the child be similarly afflicted.[2] Today most parents apparently are not too concerned about these dangers, but if an illness of the child is attributed by the medicine man to some infraction of these rules, the parents readily accept the interpretation. One young father blamed his little son's illness on the fact that, during his wife's pregnancy, he had helped white men test the blood of horses.

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The whole household looks forward with joy to the coming of another baby, for children increase the status of the parents, insure the future solidarity and prosperity of the household, and secure the elders against the privations of helpless old age. Although the male is dominant in this Indian group, not much preference is shown for boys; children of either sex are welcomed and treated with equal care. The Papago are aware, however, that one capable woman can manage a large household but that one man cannot handle a farm and herd. Hence the loss of a male child is felt more keenly, as is apparent in such phrases as "and it was a boy too!" There is no evidence that twins are considered undesirable or that one of them is put out of the way. Several sets of living twins are known to the writer, and people speak readily of the death of one of a pair of twins.[3]

[345]

BIRTH

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The great majority of Papago are born at home. In the western districts, the distance to the Reservation hospital at Sells (sixty-five to one hundred miles), bad roads, and general distrust of white medicine keep most women from going to the hospital. Even the inhabitants of the eastern districts, who are closer to the hospital, do not seem to relish the thought of their babies being delivered by a white man.[4]

In childbirth at home the mother is attended by her own mother if possible; otherwise by her husband's mother or any adult female of the household. The woman in labor kneels and grips a post or is supported by the attendants. If

2. Ruth Underhill, *The Social Organization of the Papago Indians*, p. 156.

3. There is some indication that, if one twin must die, it should preferably be the last-born. A medicine man carves wooden figurines about seven inches high which represent the twins. One figurine is buried with the dead child and the other is kept in the house with the living twin. Each is thus thought to be unaware that his twin is not with him; neither will become lonely for the other and attempt reunion. In the old days, according to Underhill (*ibid.*, p. 158), twins were considered to have magic power.

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4. Between 1940 and 1943 three Hickiwan women who had learned English at school went to the hospital, but two did not go until after difficult deliveries at home. In the East, hospital deliveries are more frequent, but they are still only a small fraction of the total.

5: Castetter & Bell N-5 (1938-1940) 1942
NU28 Papago NU28
Pima NU29

number of comparisons between the Pima and the Pueblos, or by Underhill or Whiting,[7] the general situation has its counterpart among the Pueblo Indians.

Another Pueblo resemblance is seen in the assertion of some Pima informants that, if a man accidentally cut off a stalk of corn while hoeing, it was buried in the field, or tucked under his belt and carried home at night. He felt very badly about the experience for corn was his very life. It was just like "killing his own life," or injuring a friend. Papago had no such outlook. When a Papago cut off a stalk of corn he too felt badly, but this was due purely to economic considerations. However, one informant said that, if the hoes of two persons struck together while hoeing, it was an omen that enemies were coming, so the workers quit and prepared for them. This, too, has its Pueblo counterpart. Still another Pueblo resemblance is seen in the statement of one Pima informant that planting was always started in the east of the field and proceeded toward the west.

It is customary among the Pueblos for the people of a village to prepare, plant, hoe, irrigate and harvest the cacique's field, which in reality is a community field. Among the Pimans, it was not uncommon for the people in a village to take care of the chief's or headman's field, although this was never out of ritualistic considerations as among the Pueblos, but for purely practical reasons. Their view was that if the chief were too busily engaged with tribal matters to look after his farming it was only fair for his people to assist. It was in no sense compulsory.

Pimans, particularly younger women, carefully avoided branched or twin ears of corn, but these were commonly used to provide cornmeal for ceremonies. Informants said that women refrained from eating such ears because they feared having twins, which were regarded as an ill omen.

There was no ceremonial sexual restriction at harvest or

[7] Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 124; Whiting, *Ethnobotany of the Hopi*, p. 45.